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NEAR EAST/AFRICA DIVISION
OFFICE OF REPORTS AND ESTIMATES
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WORKING PAPER

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NEAR EAST/AFRICA DIVISION

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

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**For Week Ending
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EGYPT

The new cabinet: The long existing feud between King Farouk and Prime Minister Nahas Pasha has apparently been submerged for the time being. Since the margin held by Nahas' Wafdist Party in the new Chamber of Deputies is so overwhelming (228 out of 319 seats), he has been able to place party men in all 17 cabinet positions, in eight cases appointing men who served in his wartime government. Moreover, the King's appointment of the outgoing premier, Sirry Pasha, as head of the Royal Cabinet may improve Palace-Wafdist relations somewhat, since Sirry was primarily responsible for the fact that the recent elections which returned the Wafd to power were free of government interference. Despite outward harmony with the Wafd, however, Farouk is expected to insulate the Egyptian armed forces against unlimited Wafdist control by appointing the retiring War Minister, Haidar Pasha, as Chief of Staff.

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IRAN

Cabinet shakeup: The recent shakeup in Prime Minister Saed's cabinet failed to change the ministerial lineup to the extent that the general public had expected, possibly because of reluctance on the part of some potential choices to enter a cabinet which must resign as soon as the Majlis opens. Nevertheless, the new cabinet represents some improvement over its predecessor, notably in its inclusion of three relatively youthful newcomers, in the replacement of Foreign Minister Hekmat, whose latest ineptitude was the proposed expulsion order against Iraqi Jews, and in the termination of General Ahmadi's long occupation of the Ministry of War.

Saed will probably retain the premiership long enough to steer the attempt to get the controversial Anglo-Iranian Oil Company agreement ratified by the Majlis. After that, however, the Shah will probably act on his belief that Iran's present economic and social problems require a more forceful man at the helm--and may even be giving serious consideration to the widely rumored candidacy of Chief of Staff Razmara,

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Razmara's already strong position was even further improved by the dropping of General Ahmadi, who had long been critical of him, in favor of General Yazdan Panah, formerly chief of the Shah's military household. Razmara also benefits by the recent removal of the septuagenarian Marshal Shabbakhti from the military governorship of Azerbaijan; while the inept Shabbakhti has been given the job of the civilian Governor General, the real power remains in the hands of the military commanders, who now report directly to Razmara. Despite these developments, there is as yet no substantial indication that the Shah supports Razmara's ambitions, and it is unlikely that the Shah would agree to his selection as prime minister unless convinced that no civilian was available capable of putting through the drastic measures required to alleviate Iran's present difficulties.

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NOTED IN BRIEF

Rumors that the Turkish Government may steal a march on the less well-organized opposition parties by advancing the date of the forthcoming general elections may have some basis in fact; it is possible that the voting might be scheduled for as much as three months before the expiration in July of the customary four-year period between elections. Allegations that the government party may utilize an early election date to evade its promise to enact electoral reform, however, deserve little credence, inasmuch as government leaders undoubtedly realize that such a course of action could be politically suicidal. Whatever date is set, therefore, the election is almost certain to be conducted under the new procedures, which (however reluctantly) the government party is now openly committed to support.

There are signs of a recrudescence of Pan-Turanianism in Turkey, apparently inspired by refugees to Turkey who report upon Soviet maltreatment of Turkish peoples. The Turkish Government, which usually represses manifestations of racism even more severely than signs of Communism, has not recently taken any such action. The evidence is not nearly sufficient, however, to be interpreted as representing any change in governmental policy.

The current impasse in the Israeli-Jordan negotiations is unlikely to be resolved before the question of the internationalization of Jerusalem comes before the UN Trusteeship Council. The Council is scheduled to open its session at Geneva on 19 January, but it is probable that the formulation of a trusteeship agreement for Somaliland will be taken up first. Even with the benefit of this delay, however, the current differences between Israel and Jordan appear too great to permit a solution to be reached in the time available.

MAPAM's explanation of the Soviet vote in the GA for internationalization of Jerusalem has thrown cold water on the hope that the USSR's action would diminish Soviet influence on left wing elements in Israel.

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MAPAM explains that the USSR was forced into this stand by the Israeli Government's continued anti-Soviet policy, and further, that the USSR is not aligned with the Vatican and the Arabs, since it never voted for sanctions against Israel. By the same devious thinking, MAPAM concludes that lack of US action, not the Soviet vote, decided the outcome. It appears that in this case the USSR is to be allowed to have her cake and eat it too.

Amid persistent reports of an impending fourth coup in Syria, Colonel Shishakli, the leader of the December coup, is visiting Farouk and Ibn Saud to gain Egyptian and Saudi Arabian support for the present government. Meanwhile, Akram Haurani, the Minister of Defense and Shishakli's alter ego in the cabinet, is attempting to strengthen the government's internal position by disseminating the impression that Syria's current leaders are on good terms with the US. Both Shishakli and Haurani are well aware of the factions threatening their dominance--the supporters of a Syrian-Iraqi union, those who wish to recall ex-President Shukri Quwwatli, and independent Army leaders who are intriguing against the present government for reasons of private ambition. If at any time the present leaders should believe that a revolt by any of these groups were imminent, they might well resort to wholesale arrest or liquidation of the opponents in order to maintain themselves in office.

The return to Tehran on 16 January of Soviet Ambassador I. V. Sadchikov may presage a clarification of the USSR's present attitude toward Iran. Since Sadchikov's departure in April 1949, there has been much speculation to the effect that he was being held in Moscow pending a review of Soviet policy vis-a-vis Iran.

Another indication that the Shah is going ahead with his plans for a 150,000-man army is provided by the new army budget, which calls for expenditures 80 percent greater than those of last year. The new budget has now been approved by the Minister of Finance.

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Apparently the Colombo (Ceylon) conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers has failed to produce any results which may be expected to relieve the tension of Indo-Pakistani relations. Formal discussions excluded the question of economic warfare between India and Pakistan and did not touch upon Kashmir. During informal conversations with British Foreign Secretary Bevin, Prime Minister Nehru of India and Finance Minister Chulam Mohammed of Pakistan both promised to attempt to break the trade deadlock now threatening the economies of their countries, but there is little evidence as yet that these promises will be implemented. Kashmir was not mentioned.

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